

Press Release

Italian Institutions Partner with SRTI Park to Run Cooperative R&D Programs, and Attract Tech Startups, SMEs and Small Corporates

Kilometro Rosso, Italiacamp and Andersen Italia will cooperate to attract by 2028 around 100 tech startups, SMEs and Small Corporates to the region's fastest growing technology park

Rome, February 24, 2025: The Sharjah Research, Technology and Innovation Park (SRTIP) is set to attract a significant number of Italian startups and SMEs within the next three years, following the signing of MoUs with three influential Italian institutions.

SRTI Park has signed the MoUs with the following organisations: **Kilometro Rosso**, a leading European science and technology park, **Italiacamp**, an organisation committed to creating new economic and social value for Italy and **Andersen Italia**, the Italian member firm of Andersen Global, an international association of tax, legal and corporate finance firms.

According to the terms of the agreements, around 100 Italian companies will set up operations at SRTI Park by 2028. The target companies will be innovative tech startups, SMEs and small corporate in diverse sectors, including medical devices, AI-assisted diagnostic, robotics, autonomous driving, space, water treatment & desalination, new materials, architecture & interior design.

Hussain Al Mahmoudi, CEO of SRTIP, commented: *"These agreements with leading Italian institutions represent a pivotal moment for SRTI Park, as we continue to expand our footprint across Europe. Italy boasts a vibrant startup ecosystem backed by strong venture capitalists, engaged in fields that form the core of our activities at this science park. We are delighted to throw open our doors to Italy's amazing tech companies to launch operations in SRTI Park, which will give them access to the growing Middle East market. Our ecosystem offers attractive facilities and incentives for innovation-driven ventures."*

A key pillar of each agreement is represented by the collaboration in R&D activities through American University of Sharjah and University of Sharjah and explore business opportunities with SRTI Park's industry and government partners.

"This agreement marks a significant milestone in fostering synergy between Italian tech startups, technology organizations, and SRTIP. The four organizations are committed in leveraging cutting-edge innovation, research, and deep-tech collaboration, to create long-lasting impact in Italy and the UAE" commented Nicola Bettio, Director of Innovation and Research Ecosystem at SRTIP.

Frontline Organisations

Kilometro Rosso, one of the leading European science parks, organized around 8 technology clusters and 33 laboratories, with a legacy of more than 900 patents filed, 2,000 publications and EUR 750m worth R&D projects, supported by EUR 180m of acquired funding. The MoU was signed by Salvatore Majorana, CEO, Kilometro Rosso.

The agreement envisages collaboration around 10 research projects by 2028 and nurturing around 20 startups in the following areas: Advanced prototyping, Mechatronics and robotics, New materials and Health sciences.

“Developing collaboration across borders is the very essence of Science Parks and we are very proud to reinforce our exchanges with Sharjah Research, Technology and Innovation Park through this agreement. Many of the technologies and startups we support will be able to benefit from an extended platform to test their products and explore new markets in the UAE. I’m grateful to IASP, the International Association of Science Parks, which gave us the opportunity to meet and strengthen our relationship with SRTIP. We look forward to a successful experience”, remarked Salvatore Majorana, Director of Kilometro Rosso.

Italiacamp is an organization dedicated to promoting projects with a high social and economic impact for Italy by leveraging organizational, relational skills. Over time, its mission has evolved to focus on supporting the international growth of Italian companies in key markets for Made in Italy. To pursue this goal, Italiacamp EMEA was established to assist Italian companies in their international expansion and to manage the Dubai Hub for Made in Italy, a 2,000 sqm space in the Convention Tower within the Free Zone of the Dubai World Trade Centre, which hosts more than 150 startups and SMEs. In recognition of its strategic role, SIMEST (Gruppo CDP) has invested in Italiacamp EMEA in 2024, joining its corporate structure to further strengthen its mission of fostering the global presence of Italian enterprises

Through this agreement, the company aims to attract to Sharjah more than 50 mature tech startups and SMEs by 2028 in the following sectors: Healthcare (medical devices, AI-assisted diagnostic), Advanced Manufacturing (additive manufacturing, automation & robotics), Mobility (smart cities, EV, autonomous driving), Sustainability (waste management, water treatment & desalination) and Creative Industries (architecture, interior design, fashion).

At the signing ceremony, Italiacamp was represented by Fabrizio Sammarco, CEO of Italiacamp srl and Leo Cisotta, General Manager of Italiacamp EMEA.

Fabrizio Sammarco, CEO of Italiacamp added: *"With this partnership, we strengthen our commitment to creating tangible opportunities for Italian businesses, fostering their international growth, and generating a positive impact for the country. Italiacamp was founded*

to connect innovation, institutions, and enterprises, and today we want to turn this vision into real value for Italy by bringing the talent and excellence of our ecosystem to new markets."

Leo Cisotta, General Manager of Italiacamp EMEA: *"The agreement marks a crucial step in Italiacamp EMEA's mission to support the internationalisation of Italian startups and SMEs. By fostering collaboration between innovative ecosystems in Italy and the UAE, we aim to create a bridge for cutting-edge technologies, research, and business opportunities. This partnership reinforces our commitment to enabling companies to scale globally and positioning Italian excellence at the heart of international innovation."*

Andersen Italia, the Italian member firm of Andersen Global, an international association of tax, legal and corporate finance firms, has pledged to bring 30 SMEs to Sharjah by 2027, in the following sectors: Waste management, Food security, Space, Robotics and automation, Traffic management, Logistics, AI diagnostic, Patient journey and Mental health. The MoU was signed by Andrea De Vecchi, CEO, Andersen Italia.

"Italian inventiveness is well renowned – Andrea De Vecchi said – and our startups need to find the perfect environment to develop, prosper, and differentiate themselves. In a dynamic global economy, I believe that the partnership between Italian businesses and the United Arab Emirates is a positive example of innovation and expansion. Since the two nations engage in a substantial amount of bilateral trade, the cooperation with SRTI Park aims to develop economic links, build support networks, and increase access to funding while also encouraging the entrepreneurial spirit of our country".

Bilateral Economic Ties

The proposed collaborations with SRTI Park are in tune with the rapidly expanding trade ties between Italy and the UAE. In 2024, the bilateral trade volume crossed 4.8 billion euros in the first six months, registering a 26% growth compared to the corresponding period in 2023.

Italy has emerged as one of the biggest players in the world in terms of innovation and tech startups. The country's startup ecosystem has seen remarkable growth over the past decade, with over 14,000 active startups as of 2023. These companies are contributing significantly to economic growth and employment. In terms of funding, Italian startups raised €2.1 billion in 2023 alone. The public sector has been actively supporting innovation through initiatives led by entities such as the Cassa di Risparmio di Roma, which has sponsored in the last few years a large number of venture capital and private equity funds to indirectly support more than 40,000 innovative startups and SMEs.

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